

Appl. No. 10/069,507  
Amdt. Dated January 13, 2004  
Response to Office Action of September 15, 2003

**REMARKS:**

In making the amendments shown above, care has been taken to ensure that the claims remain supported by the specification and that no new matter has been introduced. The renumbering of the claims by the examiner has been adopted in the claims as set forth above.

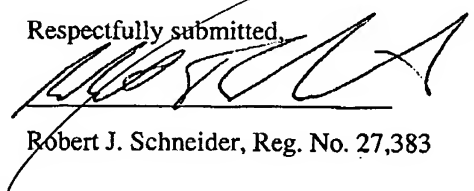
As to the Section 102(b) and Section 103(a) rejections, Applicants submit the following discussion. Fujita discloses an intake manifold having a plurality of intake conduits and a control assembly including respective valve flaps for the conduits borne by a common shaft integrated into the manifold. The shaft, in turn, is supported by a plurality of bearings 32 (figs. 1-4) or 132 (fig. 7) which are independent components slidingly coupled to the shaft; bearings 32, 132 are inserted in grooves 19 of one of the molded parts of the manifold, and are kept in place by another part (40, 140) having projections 43 that "close" grooves 19 and block bearings 32 therein.

In contrast to the invention as claimed in the amended claims herein, bearings 32 of Fujita are distinct components with respect to the manifold parts; the bearings 32 are not formed integrally with at least one of said parts as claimed in claim 18 herein. Further, piece 40 of Fujita is a plate-like piece "sandwiched" between the molded parts (10, 20, see fig. 2) forming the manifold; therefore parts 10 and 40 of Fujita, which house the control system therebetween, do not form complementary parts of the manifold chamber as claimed in claim 18 herein. In particular, part 10 of Fujita does not form part of the manifold chamber because it is separated from the manifold chamber by plate 40.

In view of these distinctions, it is respectfully submitted that the invention claimed herein is neither anticipated by Fujita, nor rendered obvious by the combination of Fujita and Mehne.

CONCLUSION. It is submitted that the invention is presented in clear and concise patentable terms and the application is in condition for allowance. Prompt, favorable treatment of the application is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this communication, including the fee under 37 CFR §1.17(a)(1) for a one-month extension of time (hereby requested) for response, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0305. The Examiner is encouraged to call Robert J. Schneider at the direct number (312) 845-3919 with any questions that arise in connection with this application.

Respectfully submitted,


  
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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.8

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I hereby certify that the attached correspondence, namely: Response to Office Action, was transmitted by facsimile on the date listed above, to the U.S. Patent Office at the facsimile number listed above, under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8.

Signature: 

Typed Name of Person Signing this Certificate: Brenda A. Walton

January 13, 2004  
Date of Signature